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MEMORANDUM

TO: Athol Board of Selectmen
FR: Shaun A. Suhoski, Town Manager
RE: Bridge Repair Status Update
DT: May 21, 2019

Chestnut Hill Avenue Temporary Closure Last Night: As the Board is aware, last night an issue with the steel plating on the Chestnut Hill Ave. Bridge (over the Millers River) was found thus forcing a closure of the street. DPW highway and water division crews did an outstanding job to secure and replace the damaged plate plus four additional plates as a precaution.

Work was completed around 11 p.m. and the road re-opened. Fortunately, the DPW had secured additional steel plates from MassDOT last year and had them in stock. This emergency repair highlighted the Town's reliance upon safe passage over the railroad and river and the need to maintain its built infrastructure.

Towards that end, the reconstruction of the **Exchange Street Bridge** will be completed in 2019 and the reconstruction of the **Crescent Street Bridge** is currently scheduled by the state for 2020. Both are vital towards ensuring access over the river.

With respect to the "temporary" steel spans on **Chestnut Hill Avenue**, the DPW Supt. and I believe that we need to engage our state legislators and others as needed to develop a coordinated approach towards ensuring long-term viability of the bridge over the railroad (MassDOT jurisdiction) and the one over the Millers River (Town jurisdiction). With the ongoing design for improvements at Five Points Intersection and the expected surge in employment at the former L.P. Athol site it makes sense to take action now. The Board's policy guidance and political support will be crucial to achieving the support and funding needed to secure these infrastructure upgrades.

Pinedale Bridge Weight Restriction: This bridge has been plated but carries a weight restriction to passenger vehicles only. There is a gaping hole through the deck and substantial evidence of deterioration. This structure is co-owned with the town of Orange along with a sister-span (the **Fryeville Bridge**). The DPW Supt. is in communication with the Orange Highway Supt., and I will be meeting with the Town Administrator, in the near-term to discuss whether more patch-work repairs, or a longer-term solution, is most viable.

During the interim, Doug Walsh has requested Bayside Engineering to review the condition of the structures and we will report back our findings and recommendations.

SEE PHOTOS ON REVERSE SIDE

PINEDALE BRIDGE
Athol and Orange

